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WORLD TRADE CENTER TASK FORCE INTERVIEW

LIEUTENANT MURRAY MURAD

Interview Date: October 4, 2001

Transcribed by Laurie A. Collins

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MR. CAMPBELL: Today is October 4th at 10:30 in the morning. We're in conference room 4E21 at headquarters. My name is Patrick Campbell, Fire Marshal, here to conduct an interview with Murray Murad about the occurrence of September 11th.

Also present in the room is --

MR. STARACE: Michael Starace, Fire Marshal.

LIEUTENANT MURAD: Murray Murad, Lieutenant Investigator with Bureau of Investigations and Trials.

Q. Okay, Murray, we're just coming here and trying to do a fact-finding mission of what you saw on September 11th in the morning of the plane crash and the incident that happened at the World Trade Center. Just tell us what you saw and did that day.

A. Well, I was conducting business down on Greenwich and Liberty at Engine 10, Truck 10, on that day. I happened to walk through the quarters around 8:35 and I asked to speak to the officer in charge of the truck -- I think that was Captain Mallery; I think it's

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M-A-L-L-E-R-Y -- I needed to speak to one of the firemen. It so happens who I was looking for, the firefighter was there.

So we went upstairs and we started to prepare the paperwork. I was conducting a confidential investigation at the fire house. It was about 8:41 that we heard a plane hovering over the fire house. It sounded like the plane was right on top of us. At that time the captain was upstairs. He was taking a shower in the office and I was conducting the work with the firefighter.

The captain came out and said: "What's going on? This is a no-fly zone. There should be no planes over here unless this is a military plane, a plane in trouble." Other than that, there was really no clue.

So about two or three minutes after hearing it, you heard something like revving. We took a look, and, boom, the north tower is hit. So what happened was everyone left the house except for the captain, because he already had his relief. What I'm assuming is that he's going to man the house. His relief was there.

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They all took off. The engine and the truck took off I guess they both were responding to a pre-arranged staging location when the World Trade Center is involved in some kind of major incident. And they all took off.

So what happened was people were running out of the building. We got a couple of injuries. We were treating them.

Q. Out of the building, out of the Trade Center?

A. Out of the Trade Center, yeah. I don't know which Trade Center building they came out of, but it was either the north or the south building.

It was very minimal, like five, six patients. They came with very, very minor injuries. There was a police officer in the fire house. I asked him: Listen, can you get an ambulance here, we have a couple minor injuries. We need an ambulance at the staging location here.

The ambulance comes in. The first EMT that walks in, he sprained his ankle. So he was not much of a help, but he tried to get these

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people as comfortable as possible.

Let me go back. Let me go back one second before this. After the first plane hit, we went downstairs after everyone took off. I was there downstairs for maybe seven, eight minutes.

I went back upstairs because I wanted to get something out of my bag. Maybe about 10 to 12-minutes after that first plane, I heard another plane. Then I said to myself, we're being attacked.

I ran downstairs. No sooner did I run downstairs and look up, that I saw the second plane strike the south tower. It was such a vicious hit and such a precision hit, it was unbelievable.

Still we didn't have that many more people coming into the fire house, just regular civilians hanging around. They were looking at everything else like that. So pretty much everything was pretty much stabilized in the fire house. The captain was still the only one there.

At that point there were two fire marshals that came to the house. They wanted to

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borrow some equipment. I can't identify who they were. I forget what they looked like. They got some gear from the house and then they took off. So I only saw them for a second. I only determined they were fire marshals because they had their jackets on.

So at this point what I did was I went around the corner to Liberty and Greenwich to tell the people listen, just keep walking, just keep walking as far as you can, just stay away from the buildings.

I got to the American Stock Exchange building. A guy came out and asked me what do you think we should do? I said listen, if it was me, I tell you in one word, R-U-N, run, just leave. Oh, we have a protocol, for this and that. Listen, you've to get your people to safety. I don't think being in the building is that safe. But this is the American Stock Exchange. I said listen, you do what you have to do. We have a couple of retired cops on the job here. So one of them called me over. I told him the same story. I said listen, you guys need to get out of here, just for safety reasons. Again,

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he told me that they have their protocol that they do.

So I continued on my little excursion here trying to get people out of the stores, out of the buildings. I went to all of the shops right behind the fire house. I said listen, just leave your building, just leave.

Q. This is on Greenwich Street?

A. Yeah, right on Greenwich and Liberty, right behind the fire house, right on -- is it Cider or Cedar?

Q. Cedar?

A. Cedar. They have all the little coffee shops there, bagel stores, gourmet shops there with all the foods. I told them just leave, just -- don't even close your business, just walk out and leave. They're telling me they're okay, they're okay. Now it's getting a little frustrating because I said listen, you should really leave. Don't lock your door, but let your employees go. That didn't seem to work.

So I went back into the fire house to see what I could do. The EMS unit was trying to treat a couple of people. We had a guy with a

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broken leg, possibly, and maybe one patient with second degree burns but nothing life-threatening. All the injuries in the fire house were minor. There were really no life-threatening injuries.

So in a matter of 15, 20 minutes, the captain yelled out and you heard this roar. All he said was run to the back, it's coming down. And we all started running to the back of the fire house.

I know the design of Engine 10, Truck 10. It's on the corner, pretty wide. Then as you go into the house it narrows into the hallway. It has a phone. It has a TV room. Then it has a bathroom and a kitchen, which I totally forgot about, the kitchen during the collapse.

Everyone's running down to the basement or upstairs. One of the firefighters, who must have come in when they were calling all these guys in, I don't know who they were, said go upstairs, go upstairs. A lot of people didn't want to go upstairs because they were afraid. The building is coming down upstairs.

So as we were running, we were picking



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up the injured people. They would fall, we would stop, two people pick them up.

Q. Still in the house?

A. Still in the house. Then it came down. From the implosion, we all got thrown and all that stuff came in the house, all that debris, all that concrete and all that fiberglass. Name it, it was in there. It was incredible. Then it started getting dark, darker. You couldn't even see in front of you.

Q. Inside?

A. Inside the fire house. You couldn't even see. I couldn't even see in front of my face. Then it became very, very black. We were trying to get out the door. The back entrance was blocked with all the rubble. Somehow they were able to get the door open. Again I think most of us forgot about the kitchen. We were all trying to go out through the back. So everyone I think got out.

So what happened was I got out and I went to see what was going on. It was a nightmare. Cars were tossed. I mean, all that stuff was in the air, on the street.

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So I walked up to Trinity Place. It just so happens I needed a mask, you know. I happened to see Matty James who was in a Jeep. I said Matty, you got a mask? He said: "I have a couple of Scott packs." I didn't want to take one because they had a couple of fire trucks that were hanging out right in front of him. I don't know what fire trucks they were, but they looked kind of beaten up from the explosion.

Q. This was on where?

A. On Trinity Place.

Q. On Trinity?

A. And Cedar.

Q. Cedar.

A. Right, right up there.

Q. They were parked there, and they were smashed?

A. I don't know if they were really smashed, but there was a lot of debris on them. I only saw one or two. I can't really identify them because there was so much debris in the air and on the ground. The pictures that you see, that's what was going on.

So he said to me: "Hop in my car, I'll

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give you a ride, because there's a cop, he's giving out masks on the corner." Meanwhile I can't see, my eyes are so red and irritated and I'm coughing up all the soot and everything. So I got a mask from the cop.

Then there was like a little cappuccino store right there. I knocked on the door and was let in. Listen, can I use your facilities here? He said oh, yeah, come on in, wash up. I just wanted to wash my face and get all that stuff out of my eyes. He said hey, have some water. He gave me a bottle of water. I was there about 15 minutes. Then I started walking out.

I walked about two, three minutes, and all of a sudden I heard a plane. Now, I'm like the only one walking on this block. I said oh, my God, we're being attacked again. Someone said it could have been a B15, a U.S. plane up in the air. Actually, what I think it was, was simultaneously the plane and the north tower coming down. So that's what the sounds were. I heard that rumble.

So I started going back to the area where Liberty Street was. I went up to Liberty

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Street. Everything's destroyed, everything, all the buildings around it. The only thing standing was the fire house.

I re-entered the fire house. I spotted a chief. I think it was Philip Burns only because someone called his name. A couple of firemen were in there. There was Firefighter Peter D'Ancona. He was there. He was assigned there. I saw him. He was looking for gear. There was no gear to be found for these guys, no turn-out coats, no nothing. Everything was gone.

Guys were coming in. A couple of companies were coming in just trying to assist. It was still dark out.

What happened was everybody got out of the house safely. I asked the captain where is everybody? He said everyone's out, everyone's fine, everyone's good. There was nothing else to do. Then I spotted the two EMTs that were assigned to the location. I said listen, I have a car --

Q. Do you remember their names?

A. No, I don't. The ambulance was destroyed in the collapse. I don't know if it

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was totaled, but there was a lot of damage to the vehicle.

Q. Where was that vehicle?

A. It was parked right inside the 10 and 10 house.

Q. On the side?

A. Right inside.

Q. Oh, inside?

A. Inside, right. They backed it up. I don't know if they were going to do triage or going to transport.

Q. How did the ambulance get damaged?

A. All the debris from the collapse of --

Q. So it was outside?

A. It was inside. From the implosion, everything just came inside.

Q. The doors were open?

A. The doors were open.

Q. Oh, the doors were open?

A. Yeah. They should have been closed, but I don't think -- no one expected within an hour the collapse. It was an awful thing.

Q. Where did you park?

A. I parked down on Greenwich between -- I

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think it's Carlisle and Rector. That's where I was parked.

Q. So you were down a little further?

A. Yeah. Because what happened was when I got to the house it was almost changing shifts and I didn't want to take a parking spot up, because they double park there and everywhere right around the corner. It was still early. I said you know what, let me just park up further. I found a spot, I pulled the car in, and then I just walked up to the fire house.

Q. You never made it to the towers? You never went near the towers?

A. No, that was just from my location of being right at 10 and 10. That was the closest I was.

Q. Philip Burns was in there during that whole time?

A. I only saw him when I came back after the second tower collapsed. I'm only saying it was Philip Burns because someone said that was Chief Burns.

Q. That was after the second?

A. After the second collapse.

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Q. When the first one was hit, you were outside?

A. No, I was almost in front of the house at the front doors. The doors were open.

Q. Which is actually right across the street?

A. Right across the street. It was on Liberty and Greenwich.

Q. You looked up and you saw the --

A. I didn't look up. What happened was the captain just -- we heard a roar, and he just yelled out it's coming down, just run to the back of the fire house.

Q. Oh, no, when it hit -- did you see it -- were you outside when it hit?

A. No.

Q. You were inside?

A. Yeah. We just heard all the rumble and all -- the collapse.

Q. I'm saying you were in the house when the first plane hit?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you go out at all right after it?

A. When the first plane hit? I did. I

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went outside.

Q. What did you see then?

A. I just saw the fire -- the smoke coming out from the top from the north tower.

Q. Was there any debris?

A. Not at that time.

Q. No debris at all?

A. No. Stuff was coming down, but nothing real major. After the second plane hit even more stuff came down.

Q. I'm sorry, when the second plane hit.

A. When the second plane hit, it was just a lot of fire, a lot of black smoke.

Q. Coming out?

A. Right. What happened was that we looked up and then within a couple of minutes one guy jumped -- an individual came out. It wasn't like a jump, because they came out backwards. Evidently from the explosion up on those floors they got blown out. Someone else came down and they were coming out. I only saw two people come out.

Now we had more people congregating in the fire house. We would just evaluate them, if



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they were injured. No, we're not injured. We need a phone.

Of course the cell phones were not working. The only cell phone that worked I think was Nextel. It's a two-way portable radio, practically, and you can have contact. You don't even have to worry about dialing. That's the only phones that were working.

Everyone's cell phones were just not working. My cell phone was dead. The beepers were dead. Everything in the fire house was dead. There was no communication whatsoever. So we just relied on whatever information we were able to get, which was actually really nothing.

Q. Were there a lot of plane parts or anything when the second one hit?

A. Not that I saw, no.

Q. You said there were firemen around you. Did you hear any transmissions going on?

A. No. It was all verbal among the firemen just discussing. The radio communication was fairly -- I didn't hear anything.

MR. CAMPBELL: Do you have anything else, Mike?

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Q. Anybody else you actually recognized?

A. I recognized the captain. I recognized one of the firefighters. I recognized a lieutenant that was from BHS. I don't know his last name. His first name is John. He was good friends with Geoff Guja. Actually they went down together. Geoff unfortunately didn't make it.

Q. You don't remember the fireman's name?

A. No, that was with him? I don't remember.

Q. Captain Mallery, he stayed in the fire house the whole time?

A. I believe so.

Q. Anything else? Is there anything else you want to add? You can say anything about how you felt or whatever.

A. It was something that if you were there, to describe it, it was horrible. It was a horrific act against us. It was something that you would never, ever think would ever, ever happen to this country.

When those towers came down, it was like a sign of something. When all these people -- I mean, war is war. They talk about

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Pearl Harbor. Bottom line is Pearl Harbor was a military base, installation. It was peace time.

But here what happened was we got two planes, our own planes, going into two towers and killing almost 5,000 people. It was just an awful day. It was day I'll never forget, just the sounds of everything and the planes hitting. The awful sound of hearing that plane over the fire house. It was like it was sitting right on top of the fire house. That's how close it was. And then revving up the engine and then hitting the north tower.

Q. You had said earlier people in the fire house were alarmed when they heard the plane. They felt something was wrong?

A. Oh, yeah.

Q. Before it even --

A. I was upstairs. There was only the captain and the firefighter. It was George Bachmann who was up there with me. George Bachmann was in Vietnam -- served in Vietnam. So he knows certain sounds. Like we said, this is a no-fly zone here. What's a plane doing here?

So as soon as that plane hit, they all

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took off. The only one left was the captain at the time. Anybody else coming back, coming into the house was either called in or off-duty guys coming in, grabbing equipment. I saw the two fire marshals. They were grabbing equipment. They asked the captain: "We need some gear."

But again, no one ever expected it to collapse like that. Just thankfully a pancake rather than toppling over. That would have been a nightmare. But in an hour the intensity of that heat must have been incredible.

Q. Did any of the guys from 10 and 10 come back after --

A. They were out. I understand that a lot of them didn't come back.

Q. So none of them came back after, while you were around?

A. No, no. They, I think, just went to the location where they were supposed to go and whatever assignment they were given. The problem was when the south tower went down, I guess there was no communication and people just went into the north tower. That's what they were saying.

When the south tower came down, that

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was where the communication was. While the north tower is still up, burning, guys were just told go into the building. There was no radio communication. That's what --

Q. You were by the south tower?

A. Right.

Q. After that got hit, were there any firefighters going into Two World Trade from Liberty Street or anything?

A. No, they just -- everyone just got in and they went to --

Q. No, I'm saying when the second one hit when they were responding when they made the other alarm for the second tower.

A. Right.

Q. Units were assigned to the second tower or the south tower. Did you see any of them go in?

A. No, no. Actually I didn't see any units from where I was. They must have all gone to Vesey or they were parked on Church right up on the street. I saw some fire apparatus up on, I think it was, Church or Trinity or right up there on Liberty Street.

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Q. Did you see any numbers or anything?

A. No.

MR. CAMPBELL: All right. This  
concludes the interview. It's 10:52. Thank  
you very much.